1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

The Sun, Light, and Fire

778 There is no doubt that the sun is an object of reverence to
788 the Todas. It is the duty of every man when first he leaves
his hut in the morning to salute the sun by raising his hand
821 to his face in the *kaimukhti* salutation. The sun is also saluted by the *palol* as he comes out of his dairy to milk the buffaloes. All my informants were unanimous in saying that the salutation of the *palol* was both to the buffaloes and to the sun. The doors of the great majority of the dairies faced more or less in an easterly direction, so that the dairyman, on coming out of his dairy in the morning, would see the sun, and when the dairy had a different orientation, as at Mòdr, the *palol* had to turn so that he would perform the salutation looking eastward. At the afternoon ceremonial the salutation was performed in the same direction as in the morning, so that, so far as the salutation is performed to the sun, it would appear that it is to the place of the sun-rise rather than to the sun itself.

The sun plays a part in the ceremony which takes place when a woman goes to the seclusion-hut after childbirth, but there was some reason to think that this was due to the belief in the noxious influence of the mysterious body, Keirt, which is near the sun, and not to the influence of the sun itself. When performing the ceremony on leaving the seclusion-hut the woman faces the sun, and this may be an act of reverence, since now Keirt is no longer feared. It seemed quite clear that the moon is not saluted in the same way as the sun with the *kaimukhti* salutation. No salutation is paid at all to the new moon when it is first seen, but after a day or two, usually on the third day, it is the custom to bow down the head, so that the forehead rests on the corner of the *putkuli* lying on the ground. The salutation is that called *nersatiti* shown in Fig. 44. I only heard of one custom indicating reverence to the full moon. When the Todas throw away water on the day of the full moon, they do not throw it towards the moon, but away from it. Thus, if the moon is opposite the door of the hut, the people will go round to the back in order to throw the water there.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda
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CHAPTER XXIV

ARTS AND AMUSEMENTS

181 234 177 THE arts of life among the Todas are extremely simple. The fact that their agriculture is done for them by the Badagas and that all the objects they use in their daily life are made for them by the Kotas leaves them free to devote their whole attention to the care of the buffalo and the dairy. This employment has acquired so ceremonial a character that, having dealt with the ceremonies of the Todas, we find little left to consider in connexion with the regulation of the affairs of daily life.

181 531 The artistic side of life among the Todas is but little developed. Their interest is so much absorbed in ceremony that little is left for the development of art, even of a primitive kind. The decorative arts are of the simplest and are directed only to the adornment of the clothing or the person, and even here we shall find that the methods of wearing the clothes or the hair are quite as much influenced by ceremonial as by æsthetic considerations. In their amusements again we shall find that the influence of ceremonial is so great, that many of the games are merely imitations of ceremonial occupations.

821 I have included in this chapter an account of the ideas which are held about the heavenly bodies, the primitive astronomy of the people. To the Todas, though in a less degree than to many people of low culture, it is the sun, moon, and stars which are the chief objects of those observations and speculations which are the beginnings of science.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

Astronomical Ideas

772 821 We have already seen that the Todas reverence the sun, and that the period of the moon is of the greatest importance in the regulation of the times for their ceremonies. In this chapter we have to deal with their views as to the nature of these bodies and of the stars.

The Sun

The Todas believe that when the sun goes down in the west, it goes to Amnòdr. The same sun illuminates both worlds, and this is shown very well in the story of Kwoto; when this demi-god tied down the sun, there was darkness both in this world and in the other, and the people of Amnòdr joined with those of this world in imploring that the sun should be restored to its proper place.

When the Todas know that there is going to be an eclipse of the sun, they abstain from food, but they do not shout out during the eclipse as we shall see they do in the case of the moon. When the eclipse is over, they have a feast with *ashkkartpimi*.

The Moon

The new moon is called *mut* and the full moon *nêrv*. We have already seen the enormous influence of the period of the moon in Toda ceremonial and I have given above the method of counting between the periods of new and full moon so as to know the correct day of the new moon if for any reason it should not be visible.

772 773 821 The Todas see a figure in the moon which they call *mürs*, the hare.[1] The following story not only shows how the hare comes to be there, but also furnishes the explanation of eclipses of the moon and the origin of the Paikara river.[2]

Two men who were *matchuni* (see p. 501) went out one day to fetch honey. After a time they separated, and one

[1] In India the marks on the moon are frequently supposed to represent a hare.

[2] For another version of this story obtained by Mr. Thurston, see *Bulletin*,

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

772 821 childbirth. It is said to be a star which is never present in the same part of the sky as *Kadsht*. The reason for this is that once *Keirt* and *Kadsht* fought together. *Kadsht* had six men and *Keirt* only one. *Keirt* broke the leg of one of the six men, so that now there are five stars close together in the Pleiades and one lags behind. On account of this quarrel Swami ruled that *Kadsht* and *Keirt* must never be together, but that when *Kadsht* is on one side of the sky, *Keirt* must always be on the other.

When talking about *Keirt* in connexion with the ceremony of going to the seclusion-hut, it was said that *Keirt* was near the sun and that the sun was dangerous because *Keirt* was near it. It seemed that *Keirt* was always near the sun, which led me to suspect at first that it was Venus. It was quite clear, however, that this was not so. No one could show me *Keirt*, nor was anyone clear as to the part of the sky in which it was to be seen at any time in the night, and I think it most probable that this mysterious inhabitant of the sky is not a star at all, but a being allied to the Hindu *Ketu*. On the other hand, at a funeral attended by Samuel, the setting of *Kadsht* and the appearance of *Keirt* was taken as the sign that the proceedings of the *azaramkedr* might begin, [177] which looks as if *Keirt* was a real heavenly body. I think it is most probable that the whole idea of the injurious influence of *Keirt* is borrowed from the Badagas, and, if this is the case, the Toda word is probably merely an altered form of *Ketu*. I was told that *Keirt* was a Badaga word and that the Badagas feared its influence on women after childbirth.

A group of stars called *Pòdimin*, or porcupine star, corresponds to the stars in the sword of Orion. They are regarded as a porcupine from which the three stars of the belt are trying to escape.

A constellation of seven stars is called *Katikâlmin*. From the description it appeared to be the Great Bear. This constellation was not visible, but when I made a drawing of its seven chief stars, it was at once recognised as *Katikâlmin*.

A single star called *Ishtkati* is almost certainly Sirius.

1; Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

A single star called Ishtkati is almost certainly Sirius.

This star was not visible in the evenings during my visit, and at first Jupiter was pointed out to me as *Ishtkati*, but this was certainly wrong. *Ishtkati* appeared to correspond to the Badaga *etukadichi*, which means "bull deceiving." The origin of the name is that one night a Badaga went out from his house and saw a very bright star, so bright that he thought it was the morning star. So he let his bulls out from the enclosure in which he had put them for the night. When a long time passed and it did not become day, the man said, "Let the star be called *etukadichi*."

A pair of stars to which the Todas give the names of *Tûdrvalmokh* and *Tidiishti* are near Aldebaran, forming part of the Hyades (probably γ and ϵ Tauri). The following story tells how these stars come to be in the sky.

Once on the hills there was a bird with young. The mother went away to get food and a snake came to eat the young ones. When the young birds saw the snake climbing up the tree, they called out to Kudursami, who is above. He heard their cry and took them to the sky. The name of the bird was *tûdrval*, and so one star is called *tûdrvalmokh*. The *tûdrval* still sings "*Kudursami trrrrrr*."

According to another version, the bird *tûdrval* had offended Swami, and as a punishment Swami took its young and they became the two stars.

This story appears to be a well-known Indian folk-tale, and it has certainly been a recent acquisition of the Todas.

It will be seen that there is much reason to believe that the greater part, if not all of the ideas of the Todas about the stars have been borrowed. In their own folk-lore there seems to be very little concerning the heavenly bodies except in the story of the man and the honey, and I even suspect this to be a borrowed legend which has been somewhat modified by Toda ideas.

It is interesting, and I think important, that references to Swami occur in these stars-myths. In an earlier chapter I have given it as my opinion that the idea of Swami has only recently been acquired by the Todas, and I attach importance to the occurrence of the name in legends which have certainly been borrowed from another race.

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

me, that the Pekkans are poor and have few herds, therefore *they have no occasion for a God* to protect them. I see the man now before me shaking his grave head, 'Aha, they don't want a God.' CHAP. XII. 771 776

'First divest your mind of cant,' said Dr. Johnson. The Toda anticipated that sage advice long years ago. What is the *use* of a God if not to protect life and property? And no property, no God! I dwell on this phase of the primitive mind, for it will liberate us much from the necessity for searching for evidences of religious worship in the customs, whose description I am entering upon.

The sum of real Toda belief is, that they were born, they and their cattle, somehow—rose out of the earth. When they die they go to amnôr,[4] which is a world exactly like this; whither their buffalos join them, to supply milk as in this state—*voilà tout*. They look on this migration from the nomad point of view: but do not appear to be quite clear whether they and their cattle go to amnôr in the body or the spirit. Some practical difficulties appear to present themselves, to whichever belief they bend. The abstruseness of the question is acknowledged. They are satisfied that they *do* get there, and don't care to speculate and reopen a matter which has so long and so satisfactorily been settled! 771 775

A good opportunity presenting itself, in a visit with which I was favoured by an important religious character, I asked him where amnôr was situate. He did not appear surprised at the question, or in a moment's doubt as to the locality. Looking about him in the sky as if to ascertain the cardinal points of the compass; as all Orientals do; who living without clocks or barometers, read the signs in the heavens for guidance 772 775 821

[4] Amnôr, amnâr, ômunâr = *the next world.*
Nâr or nâḍu = *district, country.* This is Tamil.
Ôma is a difficulty. Yaman is the '*God of death.*'
It seems to be = avay, which in Tamil = *there*, and is sometimes used for *the other world.* In Tamil, ammai = *the next state* or *stage in transmigration.* [POPE.]

CHAP. XII.

and information, he pointed direct to the west. 'Where the sun goes down'[3] he said. The quiet certainty with which he spoke, then ceased to speak, was impressive, leaving a feeling of sadness as from the vibrations of an air just played, or of 'a tale that is told;' to think that the place of their future residence—where Toda shall, without fail, meet Toda—was known to them; that this man in his simple belief should be so clear on a subject which has engaged the religious mind of refined nations for ages in vain.

The Toda makes use of the word pâpum for sin, but I more than doubt if he has any word for hell. In reality neither one nor the other subject engages his attention. What has already been described, is his deep-grounded belief: any little matters, as sin and punishment, may be looked on as after-growths. He has also Gods—a little g should be sufficient for them—presiding over certain hills and villages, but he seems to know nothing about them. Spirits and ghosts—bhût—devilry and witchcraft—pilli—also occupy a position in his beliefs. But the Todas are not communicative on these or indeed on any subject connected with religion or the unseen. Most probably they have but little to tell; and superstitious dread of the invisible or half-known, prompts them to keep that little, dark.

A reference to the vocabulary, will show that most words connected with what is commonly termed religion, are almost pure Sanskrit: whilst those relating to the extraordinarily simple practices in course of narration, are either much corrupted Sanskrit, or are free of Âryan influence. From these facts I deduce the possibility that prior to their migration into India, the Âryas of that era, when probably of a somewhat similar stage of culture to the Todas, may have influenced their rudimental religious proclivities. But that any ideas they now possess on religious subjects have come to them quite in modern times from Brahmanical sources; through

[3] See note 2 of Chapter V.

7:Thurston E-5 (no date)1909
AW60 Toda AW60

778 823 539 following day, the nephew went alone to the spot where the honey was hidden, and found, to his disappointment, that the honey was leaking through the bottom of the bamboo measures, which were transformed into two snakes. Terrified at the sight thereof, he ran away, but [825] the snakes pursued him (may be they were hamadryads, which have the reputation of pursuing human beings). After running a few minutes, he espied a hare (*Lepus nigricollis*) running across his course, and, by a skilful manœuvre, threw his body-cloth over it. Mistaking it for a man, the snakes followed in pursuit of the hare, which, being very fleet of foot, managed to reach the sun, which became obscured by the hoods of the reptiles. [821] This fully accounts for the solar eclipse. The honey, which leaked out of the vessels, became converted into the Paikāra river.

233 166 In connection with the migrations of the herds of buffaloes, Dr. Rivers writes as follows. "At certain seasons of the year, it is customary that the buffaloes both of the village and the ti should migrate from one place to another. Sometimes the village buffaloes are accompanied by all the inhabitants of the village; sometimes the buffaloes are only accompanied by their dairyman and one or more male assistants. There are two chief reasons for these movements of the buffaloes, of which the most urgent is the necessity for new grazing-places . . . . The other chief reason for the migrations is that certain villages and dairies, formerly [796] important and still sacred, are visited for ceremonial purposes, or out of respect to ancient custom." For the following note on a buffalo migration which he came across, I am indebted to Mr. H. C. Wilson. "During the annual migration of buffaloes to the Kundahs, and when they were approaching the bridle-path leading from

8:Emeneau L-5 (1935-1937) 1938
AW60 Toda AW60

It is said that the munds and the other gods assemble there, and their approach and departure are known to the Todas when they see whirlwinds going into or leaving the dairy. All lamps when they are extinguished at night go to this dairy to provide light in case the gods are holding a night-assembly.

§4. The prayer at each dairy is made up of a list of names of objects connected with the dairy-complex, in forms usually different from their ordinary names. These are the kūasm (the word is best translated as "sacred name"). For each mund (in sense 2 of footnote 4) there is a pair of kūasm, as also for the people of the sib as a whole (among the toiṛθasoɨ̯ moiety, but not among the tödfiɨ̯joɨ̯), for the buffaloes of the sib, and for the funeral-munds, tiɪ-dairies (i.e. the most sacred grade of dairy which never has dwelling houses attached), and their buffaloes. Some of the more important mountains, rivers, Badaga villages, and other localities on the Nilgiris have similar pairs of kūasm, while all the other less important localities, small streams, valleys, ravines, hills, groves and the paths through them, level grounds and rocky grounds on the hills, buffalo tracks, etc., have a name and at least one kūasm by which they are mentioned in prayers. All these places are regarded as being closely associated with some mund, generally the nearest one. In addition, within the mund there are dairies, pens, calf-sheds, watering-places, rocks, cooking-places used at ceremonies, trees, shady places where the people sit, all with names and at least one kūasm which is used in prayers. The bells in dairies are also named. All such things and places are referred to in songs also by the kūasm.

MEN'S NAMES

§5. Each sib then has associated with it a large number of names and kūasm, most of them with sacred associations. It is from these that men are named. In many cases a name is used without change. ümɨoiɪ of the meɨ̯gaisoɨ̯ (48, Ushadr) is named after the chief male funeral-place of the sib. paɪng (47, Pongg) is named after a bell in one of the dairies of the sib. maθaɪɪ of the kaɪsoɨ̯ (10, Makars) has the name of one of the tiɪ-places of this sib. toɪsjaʃʃ of the kaɪsoɨ̯ (15, Tarsiolv) has the name of the kurpoɨ̯j dairy at the mund kaɪs. komdüɪɪ of the toiroiɪoɨ̯ (23, Kandu) is named after the pen of the kogfoɨ̯j dairy at the mund toiroiɪ. pepoib of the meɨ̯gaisoɨ̯ (44, Pepob) has the name of a snake said to live at kuɪsaɪs, a mund of the sib. köɪroiɪɪüɪɪs of the köɪroiɪoɨ̯ (26, Keradrkutan) has as his name the second kūasm of the people of the sib. oɪtjaɪs of the puɪgoiɪoɨ̯ (34, Atiurs) has the second kūasm of the people of the sib. munoimbiʃʃtj, son of koɪtsiθj (12, Kacheidl) has one of the kūasm of the buffaloes of his sib.